

**IDAHO WOLF MANAGEMENT
PROGRESS REPORT
September 26 – October 17, 2008**

Monitoring

Over the past two weeks, Idaho Fish and Game biologists have placed collars on two wolves incidentally caught and held in fox traps by private individuals north of Fairfield. Biologist also collared two wolves in a pack north of Idaho City that was involved in a depredation. Wolves were harassed out of the area where the depredation occurred.

Seasonal Nez Perce Tribal biologists Isaac Babcock and Kari Holder have completed their field efforts for the year.

Management

Idaho Fish and Game investigated cause of death of two wolf carcasses, one in Unit 28 and one in Unit 27. The Nez Perce Tribe investigated one.

From January 1 – October 15, agencies have documented 124 dead wolves in Idaho. Of those, 80 were depredation control actions by U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services, five were illegal kills, 13 were legal kills, three were natural deaths, and 23 were other or unknown. An additional nine wolves were suspected dead (reported road kills not verified, collars on mortality not picked up, etc.).

From January 1 – October 15, Wildlife Services confirmed that wolves killed 11 cows, 79 calves, 210 sheep, 13 dogs; injured one cow, seven calves, six sheep, seven dogs; probably killed five cows, 21 calves, 57 sheep; and injured one cow, three calves and one sheep.

Table 1. Confirmed wolf depredations and wolf mortality in Idaho from 2003 to October 15, 2008.

YEAR	Depredations ¹				Wolf Mortality			
	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	Total	WS ²	10j ³	Other	Total
2003	7	130	3	140	7	0	8	15
2004	19	176	4	199	17	0	21	39
2005	29	166	12	207	24	3	16	43
2006	41	237	4	282	35	7	19	61
2007	57	211	10	278	43	7	27	77
2008	90	210	13	313	80	13	31	124
Total	243	1130	46	1419	206	30	122	359

¹ Includes depredations resulting in death or injury

² Authorized take by Wildlife Services

³ Authorized take under 10j for protection of stock and dogs

Control

From September 26 – October 15, WS confirmed eight wolf depredations and determined that another depredation was probable. WS confirmed that wolves killed 17 sheep, two cows and four calves and probably killed another two calves. During the

reporting period, WS killed two wolves in response to these and earlier depredations. During the same time period last year, WS confirmed five wolf depredations and had another six that were determined to be “probables”.

Non-lethal efforts are wrapping up this week for a cooperative effort near Ketchum to reduce livestock/wolf conflicts. Sheep are being gathered up for the year. Four producers, USFS, USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Fish and Game, Blaine County Commission, and Defenders of Wildlife experimented with the use of paid non-lethal personnel (funded by Defenders) who used fladry and penning for sheep at night, and attempted to scare wolves away from sheep during the night. Wolves were around the sheep on a regular basis but only one sheep was confirmed killed by wolves all summer.

Research

Nothing new to report.

Information and Education

Hunting season is upon us. We have received several reports of wolves being attracted to hunters calling elk, and wolves visiting hunter camps or eating poorly hung carcasses. Fish and Game recommends that hunters be aware that the sport of hunting increases chances of running into or attracting wolves and other carnivores.

Carcasses and gut piles attract bears, lions, and wolves and should be treated carefully to avoid problems such as having your meat fed upon. The rule of thumb is to try to get the carcass out of the woods the same day it is killed. It helps to place the gut pile on a tarp and drag it away from the carcass. If that is not possible, hang meat 10 feet off the ground. You should leave clothes, human scent, tarps, etc. to deter carnivores from scavenging your meat.

When returning to your kill, approach the carcass carefully and view it safely from a distance. Carnivores especially bears may be close by and might attempt to defend the carcass. Some bears, wolves, coyotes and other scavengers may venture into campsites if they smell meat or other foods. Place your game pole down wind of your camp and make sure the meat is secured 10 feet off the ground and 3 feet from a tree. Bears and wolves may eat carcasses hung within reach.

Also, wolves are protected under the endangered species act and killing one illegally is a federal offense.

The wolf webpage includes information on the lawsuit and injunction that caused wolves to be temporarily relisted under the Endangered Species Act. It also has updated information on the new 10j rule under which Fish and Game is acting as the “designated agent” for the USFWS, and conducting day to day wolf management. What the public can and can’t do under the new rules is discussed. You can find the new webpage at: <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>

We also would like to remind people that when wolves are in the area, please be aware that they may attack or injure dogs. It often helps to keep dogs in kennels or inside buildings at night and to not let them roam freely when humans are not around. When fresh wolf sign is found, place dogs on restraints and keep supervised. The 10j rule

allows individuals to harass or kill a wolf attacking or molesting their livestock and stock animals including pets. If you are having concerns or problems with wolves close to your residence, please inform the Fish and Game Office nearest you.

Please help us manage wolves by reporting wolf sightings on our Fish and Game observation form found at: http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/apps/wolf_report/

New: FWS – Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Status (WY, MT, ID): The U.S. Federal District Court in Missoula, Montana, on October 14, filed an order granting the United States' motion to remand the delisting rule to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

U. S. District Judge Donald W. Molloy also dismissed the case, filed by 12 conservation and animal rights groups, challenging the delisting rule.

The U.S. Department of Interior and Department of Justice are reviewing options and say the remand was the most expedient way to address the courts concerns and to delist wolves. For the time being, all wolves to the north of Interstate-90 in Idaho remain listed as endangered. All wolves in the southern half of Montana, all portions of Idaho south of Interstate-90, and all of Wyoming are being managed under the 2005 and 2008 Endangered Species Act nonessential experimental population 10j regulations. The State of Idaho Department of Fish and Game is acting as the designated agent for the USFWS in implementing day-to-day management of wolves under the MOU between the Secretary of Interior and Governor of Idaho signed January 2006.

Molloy had issued a preliminary injunction on Friday, July 18, 2008, that reinstated temporary Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves in the northern Rocky Mountain DPS pending final resolution of the case. This included all of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, the eastern one-third of Washington and Oregon, and parts of north-central Utah. On September 22, the United States filed its motion to vacate the delisting rule, return the gray wolf to the list of endangered and threatened species, and remand the matter to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Delisting wolves and assuring their proper long-term management is and has been of highest priority for the state of Idaho and the Fish and Game Department. We continue to work along with the Department of Interior, Department of Justice, and other states and interveners toward the eventual delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains, and move toward state management under the State Wolf Conservation and Management Plan and the Wolf Population Management Plan.

You may review past wolf weekly publications on our wolf webpage and links along with all pertinent and updated wolf information and publications at:
<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/>